



THE NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Reviewing Stand

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Should College Students Be Drafted?

A radio discussion over WGN and the Mutual Broadcasting System

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Should College Students Be Drafted?

MR. MCBURNEY: We have our question, Colonel Armstrong: Should college students be drafted? How do you answer that?

COL. ARMSTRONG: I feel this way on this particular subject: it depends a great deal on what we have ahead of us; whether or not we have a short period of war such as we now have in Korea, or a period of war economy and preparation for war that may extend over a period of twenty years. I would think that we would have to continue a flow of trained college men, not only for the welfare of the nation itself, its civilian activities, but also for military use, if we face a long period of stress.

MR. MCBURNEY: Hyneman, how do you see this question?

'Can't Draft Everybody'

MR. HYNEMAN: Well, certainly, we can't draft everybody. Certainly we can't defer everybody. Now, at present I am unable to see any grounds which would justify deferring all college students or all bright college students in all fields of study. I think it may be possible that we are in a situation where we must recognize the necessity for deferring the intelligent, serious student who is in preparation for certain highly critical activities in which we will face a short supply if we take all those people out of college.

MR. MCBURNEY: Mr. Summerbell?

MR. SUMMERBELL: The cartoon-type of college student who spends most of his energy on social affairs and who is ambitious to make the minimum acceptable grades in the softest courses should be drafted. The serious, hard-working, talented type who can make

a greater contribution to the strength of the nation with college training than without, should have his induction postponed, not for his own benefit, but because the welfare of the nation is at stake.

MR. HYNEMAN: I think that is a sound statement. Now the question is whether or not the policies under which we are operating right now do that particular thing. It seems to me that at present we are proposing to defer students on a much wider basis than Summerbell stated. Is that right, Colonel Armstrong?

COL. ARMSTRONG: Well, of course, it presumes a deferment in all fields; that is, literature and art as well as the sciences and professions and so forth.

MR. MCBURNEY: What are the statutory provisions under which we are now deferring college students, Colonel?

Section 6 (i2)

COL. ARMSTRONG: Section 6 (i2) of the Selective Service Act of 1948 as amended provided that any person who, while satisfactorily pursuing a full-time course of instruction at a college, university or similar institution of learning, is ordered to report for induction, shall, upon the facts being presented to the local board have his induction postponed until the end of such academic year, or until he ceases satisfactorily to pursue such course of instruction, whichever is the earlier.

MR. MCBURNEY: That seems to be completely clear. In other words, we have been doing that during the current school year.

COL. ARMSTRONG: That is correct.

MR. MCBURNEY: If a lad is in college and is carrying the work satisfactorily, he is deferred until June.

COL. ARMSTRONG: Yes, he may be deferred from September when he enters school and is attending classes until June, when the class period ends.

MR. MCBURNEY: Now, the thing that produces this discussion really is this new Executive Order providing for general tests to be given to college students and deferring them on the basis of their scores on these tests.

COL. ARMSTRONG: That is correct.

MR. HYNEMAN: I understand that the arrangement which Col. Armstrong just described comes to an end at the close of the present school year and we move over to the new arrangement governed by an executive order.

COL. ARMSTRONG: Actually the basic law will continue in operation. Induction of any student will be postponed under the basic law as I explained. This is an entirely new situation that is created for the student by the Executive Order.

'The Executive Order'

MR. MCBURNEY: This Executive Order supplements rather than replaces the present statutory provisions, am I correct in that?

COL. ARMSTRONG: That is correct.

MR. MCBURNEY: What is this proposal to defer on the basis of general tests, anyway? What is this Executive Order?

COL. ARMSTRONG: Well, the Executive Order which was issued by the President is the result of two years of study by a large committee made up of twenty-four members who were originally divided into six committees, and met as sub-committees. They presented reports to the committee of the whole and then they worked out a general report and a general program. That was called the Trytten Committee. They reported in December of 1950. On the basis of that, the Presi-

dent's Executive Order No. 10230 was issued, which provides that any student who is in college may take these tests and if he passes with a score of seventy or better on the test, he may be deferred during the period of his college life, or his local board may consider his position among the male members of his class. For instance, a student in the Graduate School should be currently meeting degree requirements. A student entering the senior year or pursuing the fifth and sixth years of an undergraduate course should be among the upper three-fourths of the male members of his class. Students entering the junior year should be in the upper two-thirds of the sophomore class. Students entering the sophomore year should be among the upper half of the male members of the freshman class. Those seeking admission to the graduate school should have 75 or better on the test or should be among the upper half of the male members of their graduating class.

MR. MCBURNEY: This deferment of a student will be at the pleasure of his draft board.

Deferred Not Exempt

COL. ARMSTRONG: At the pleasure of his draft board. It is purely under the jurisdiction, certainly, of the local Selective Service board, subject to the appeals rights that are inherent in the law.

MR. MCBURNEY: Now, I am correct in this, am I not, that such deferment is a *deferment* and not an *exemption* from military service?

COL. ARMSTRONG: That is correct. It is expected that at the time he completes his course—and we have found that the average graduate is about twenty-two years of age—he will then be subject to consideration by his local board for entry into the military service.

MR. SUMMERBELL: He will serve later, in other words, but he will serve better because of additional training for the jobs that the country needs to have done.

COL. ARMSTRONG: That is what we believe and that is the objective of the Executive Order, to develop the necessary skills and knowledge that are required in modern warfare.

Military Service Later

MR. HYNEMAN: Do you mean by your statement, Mr. Summerbell, that he will serve later in military service?

MR. SUMMERBELL: If that is where the country needs him most.

MR. HYNEMAN: Or may it not be expected that the nature of the training which these students are taking, and because of which they are deferred, will lead to their serving in industry, in the laboratory and so on, and, therefore, many of these people, we hope, will not ever see military service?

MR. SUMMERBELL: You mean that "you" hope or that "we" hope?

MR. HYNEMAN: The expectation in back of the policy is that by deferring people who are now in college, we will produce men whose usefulness in the laboratory, in industry and other places not in military uniform will be so important that probably many of these students never will be called up for military service. Is that not the expectation back of the policy?

COL. ARMSTRONG: I would say this: that regardless of the amount of education they get, as long as they are under the ceiling, the age ceiling in the law, the local board will still determine, subject to appeal, after their graduation, whether or not they shall serve in the military services or be deferred. Just because they take this course is no assurance that they are going to avoid military service.

MR. MCBURNEY: And if it can be demonstrated after their period in college, I take it, that they would serve their country better in some civilian capacity, their deferment could be continued. Right?

COL. ARMSTRONG: Their deferment could be continued because, I repeat, the local board does have control of

the classification subject to the appeal.

MR. MCBURNEY: Before we debate the wisdom of this proposal, let me ask one more question, Colonel. How are these boys, boys eighteen or eighteen and a half years old, the lads that are likely to be inducted, who are planning to go to college, how are they affected by this new Executive Order?

COL. ARMSTRONG: You mean those who have not yet entered college?

High School Seniors

MR. MCBURNEY: Yes, they are finishing high school now and are planning to go to college; can they take these tests now?

COL. ARMSTRONG: Yes, they will be able to take these tests, but not this particular group of tests. They will take later tests that will be set up, because we are now inducting men who are twenty-one years of age. The boy who graduates from high school this June, we will say, will have plenty of time to get into college this fall. He will then be subject to the statutory postponement of one year, and during that time he may be allowed to take the tests to determine whether or not he should continue his sophomore and other years in college.

MR. MCBURNEY: I think that clarifies the matter we are discussing here. Let me ask a question that I think Hyneman has in mind, Summerbell. Why should any special deferment be granted to college students, anyway? That is, does college training develop knowledge and skills of use to the military effort?

MR. SUMMERBELL: Very definitely, yes. In the last war we were cut off from silk, and college-trained men gave us special nylons for parachutes and flak vests and self-sealing gas tanks. We were cut off from rubber. Patton's dash across Europe was possible because college-trained men gave him synthetic rubber for his tires. We were cut off from quinine, but we could fight and win the war in malaria-infested Africa and in the South Pacific because we had the skills to

make quinine substitutes. High octane gas won many dog-fights. Proximity fuses solved the problem of Japanese suicide pilots. College-trained men gave us penicillin, sulfa drugs and blood plasma. Thousands of our listeners are alive because of the college-trained men's skills that they learned in college.

MR. MCBURNEY: Does that comport with your experience in Selective Service, Colonel?

Adviser's Report

COL. ARMSTRONG: Yes, it does. The other day I had one of my World War II occupational advisers drop in to my office, Professor John Schommer of the Illinois Institute of Technology. As well as being an adviser to me, he also was an adviser to some very highly placed agencies in Washington, and he recalled to mind two or three cases that I think are worthy of discussion here. One case is a B.S. in mechanical engineering.

MR. MCBURNEY: That is a man with a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering.

COL. ARMSTRONG: That is correct. He was withdrawn by me on the request of John Schommer the night before he was to be inducted. This man was placed on a train. His wife was not notified. He had no baggage, and he was sent over to Akron, Ohio, to the United States Rubber Company. They had to have a designer. While there, he re-designed the Swedish Bofors anti-aircraft machine gun, increasing the range by over 1,800 yards and improving maneuverability and increasing the production rate by sixty-five per cent. At the same time, the accuracy was greatly improved.

Then there was another graduate who was flown hundreds of miles to take charge of fighting fire which was out of control on a battleship and which might have forced abandonment of the ship. Because of his educational training in this field, he had the knowledge that enabled him to bring the fire under control and possibly save hundreds of lives. That was Lt.

Commander Scanlon.

Then there was a chap who was recommended by Professor Schommer to the Navy. He was a graduate of Princeton in literature and art. He served as a cryptographer as an officer in the United States Navy. He helped to break some of the enemy's most important codes. He had to know at least two foreign languages, be a brilliant mathematician and have a faculty for solving puzzles. After the war a Navy admiral told John Schommer that this man was mainly responsible for the cracking of the tough Japanese code.

Now, there are cases of men whose college training became of vital importance to the winning of the war effort. Can you imagine the breaking of the Japanese code? How important that was and how quickly it brought victory to our side because we had the ability to do it!

College Training

MR. HYNEMAN: I am sure we can all agree that jobs of this sort must be done, that college training helps to produce men who can do such things. Now the question to be considered here, as I see it, is whether or not, in order to be sure that men with such knowledge will be available in the future, we ought to defer students who are now in college and who, in the immediately forthcoming years, will be in college. I don't think the fact that all of these things must be done is proof that we must defer men who might otherwise be called up for military service so they can stay in college and promise such achievements in the future.

MR. SUMMERBELL: College training is available only in college.

MR. HYNEMAN: Well, of course, that is right, but the college will be here even if some of the students who otherwise might go to college are drafted. That doesn't meet the question.

MR. MCBURNEY: Hyneman, does the fact that we may be drafting men for the next ten or fifteen years make

any difference in considering college deferments?

MR. HYNEMAN: I have no doubt that it does, if one reasons the whole thing out carefully, but I must admit that trying to see what is involved here on the basis of each of two presumptions, I am unable to make up my mind just what the consequence is. That is to say, I can see a case for deferment and a case against deferment, if we are just preparing for a quick war. I can see a case for deferment and a case against deferment of college students if we are preparing for a long, hard, drawn-out war. I guess the best way to put my opinion is this: I think it may be that we are already in a situation and can be reasonably sure we have a situation ahead of us that calls for very careful deferment of college students of high capacities who are preparing for certain kinds of critical service. But the Executive Order which we have before us now, the present policy of the national government, seems to be to defer or to give a blanket recommendation to the draft boards to defer students who are doing well in music, in literature, in history and so on in all fields. I can't justify that.

'The Long Pull'

COL. ARMSTRONG: Well, of course, Hyneman, under the present situation we have a rather healthy war over in Korea, but we don't have vast military forces engaged at this time or necessary at this time. During World War II there were approximately fourteen million who got military status during that period. That was what you might call an all-out mobilization. Now, this program is designed for what you might call a long pull. We expect that we will have to have an Army of three and a half million or four million or something like that for many years to come. We must continue to produce the people that are necessary for leadership, militarily and in civilian activities. I think that is the basis upon which this program can be justified. I think also that we have to figure that if we sud-

denly faced World War III, when we would again have total mobilization, that this program would then have to be brought to an end or, at least, very greatly restricted.

'Greatest Usefulness'

MR. SUMMERBELL: The high school graduate seldom knows enough to select his field of greatest usefulness. What men are you going to train to be doctors, until they have had a couple of years of college? Certainly, college administrators and parents can't do this selecting. Looking back, we can all name the areas that were important in the last war, but I don't know anyone with the nerve to think that he can do it for the next one. We might even need some good political scientists.

MR. HYNEMAN: I am puzzled about this matter of relating the experiences of the past to guesses about the future. Now, when I say that, I think that we ought to try to identify the highly critical needs of the country, and then, if necessary, defer students who are preparing for those fields. I recognize we have only the experience of the past to help us, and it may not be good. . . .

MR. SUMMERBELL: But the high school graduate isn't preparing for any field. He needs a couple of years of college to decide upon his field.

MR. HYNEMAN: Well, if I agreed with you on that, Summerbell, then I would think we might write this deferment program so that every person who goes to college and proves himself to be smart might be deferred up until the time the college professor can decide what the student is good for, or the student can decide what he is interested in. Then, from that period on, defer only those who are preparing for the critical fields. I don't like this idea of deferring the smartest students in every field of study including pump fixing, post-hole digging, clock winding, if we have such things in our colleges, or music or art or political science or history. I can't see the case for that yet.

MR. MCBURNEY: Of course, I come back to the point that we are talking here about an emergency that may be ten or fifteen or even twenty years. In those terms, Hyneman, might it not be that the arts, music, your field of political science, are critical in a very real sense?

The Arts

MR. HYNEMAN: They certainly are important. If they aren't, then society is being very foolish in maintaining people who are doing those things. So let's agree, they are highly important to American life. Now, the question is whether or not, in order to keep them going, we must defer the students who are preparing for them. There will be girls to go on and study music and art. There will be 4-F students who can't pass physical requirements who will continue. There will be men coming back from the war to go on. I don't think the study of politics in the United States will suffer greatly because, during four or five-year periods, whatever be the life of a boy's service in the Army, he will be pulled out of his normal ways of study. He will get back into it after the war is over.

COL. ARMSTRONG: Didn't I understand you to tell me, Hyneman, that you instructed a lot of people in military government during the last war, and don't you think that people in your field, political science, will be necessary and will be needed in a lot of these areas if we have World War III? It may be necessary for us to provide experts on government.

MR. HYNEMAN: Oh, surely, surely, but unless the call for them comes very late, the boys who are in college now won't contribute that kind of training. Certainly, during the last war the men being trained for the kind of service you speak of were in uniform. Some of them were drafted and were commissioned after they went into the service. The men that taught them were, in some cases, men in military uniform and in some cases civilians, but they weren't taught by

youngsters. They were taught by older people. I think we have a lot of old people to continue to do the training of young people.

COL. ARMSTRONG: How about the fellows that are going to carry out that training in the field? They have to be the younger men.

MR. HYNEMAN: Well, we had a shortage of men with particular language skills and knowledge of foreign countries, and it is true that if some boys who had been drafted had stayed in college, they might have acquired some knowledge of those languages. I want to acknowledge this: of course, if you defer all of these people, some of them will do something good. The question is, is this as fine as we can cut it? Because some may prove highly useful when their training is completed, is it necessary or wise for us to defer all smart students in college?

COL. ARMSTRONG: Professor Hyneman talked about all the students we are going to defer. Now, the figures we have received from national headquarters, where they have made a study of this program, seem to indicate that not more than about three per cent of each of the male age groups will be involved in this particular program. That is just a very small number when you figure it out.

MR. MCBURNEY: And they are to be deferred and not exempt.

COL. ARMSTRONG: They are deferred and not exempt. I am glad you brought that out. It is a temporary deferment.

Industry

MR. MCBURNEY: I have the feeling that Mr. Hyneman thinks this program that we are discussing here is unfair to the lad in industry and to the lad on the farm who doesn't get the opportunity for this kind of deferment. Is that your point?

MR. HYNEMAN: Yes, that is right. I have done too much talking here, and I want to let other people get in more words. I have this feeling: we can

guess that some of these boys that are deferred will, because of their deferment, make a great contribution to the country, but we could also guess that many a young man who is working in industry will be learning things there which will give him a future usefulness, and if we defer him, he would make a great contribution to the country.

Now, we can't defer everybody. I simply insist we have to choose very carefully whom we plan this deferment for, and while it is true that the number that would be recommended to draft boards for deferment under this program may be a very small part of the total male population, it is yet expected to be a very large percentage of those who are in college.

MR. MCBURNEY: Do you think this program is undemocratic, Colonel Armstrong?

Undemocratic?

COL. ARMSTRONG: No, I don't believe any program that is conceived for the purpose of building a strong national defense with the condition of the world such as it is today is undemocratic. If you direct men into the armed forces, they don't all come under fire. There is only a very small percentage of them who have to undergo the hazards of actual combat service, and so there again, you would have your intelligence, the same intelligence that we are talking about which would come to the top, and those men would be placed in many positions where they would be far from the battle scene.

MR. MCBURNEY: You are saying in substance that it is humanly impossible to share the risk equally.

COL. ARMSTRONG: That is correct. It always has been so.

MR. SUMMERBELL: Yes, we train a mechanic to repair the bomber, and we train a pilot to fly it. Mr. Hyneman would have them swap jobs every day or so, so that we could divide the risk every day or so.

MR. HYNEMAN: To read that kind of conclusion into anything I have

said, you really do have to look into a crystal ball.

MR. MCBURNEY: Is it fair, though, Mr. Summerbell, to the boy who cannot afford to go to college?

Financial Considerations

MR. SUMMERBELL: The demagogues have gone to town on that one. It is true that a few must help support the family, and they wouldn't be able to go to college; even if scholarships were plentiful, they would have trouble getting there. But most boys with health enough to be drafted and intelligence enough to be worth training for the national welfare can go to some kind of college. The cooperative system helps a great many of them. Some families spend their income for television sets and new cars and steak, and others listen to the radio and drive the old car and eat beans and send the kid to college on the same income. We are not selecting boys to excuse them from the draft. We are selecting those who, with college training, will make this country invincible.

MR. MCBURNEY: Do you think that, as Hyneman has suggested, we ought to confine this to the critical areas, Colonel Armstrong?

COL. ARMSTRONG: I wouldn't entirely agree with that, because who is going to determine which are critical areas? For instance, take the nuclear physicists. Some ten or twelve years ago they wouldn't have thought of deferring that individual, because he would have been a luxury. Take the Japanese professor who was used in military intelligence in the Far East. That fellow would not have been considered under a program of this kind in those old days.

MR. HYNEMAN: Let's agree that we can't ever plan anything in advance with complete assurance that what we plan to do would prove to be best. That surely isn't an argument that we shouldn't do the best planning we can, based on past experience. It could turn out . . .

ANNOUNCER: I'm sorry, gentlemen, but our time is up.



Suggested Readings

Compiled by Eugen Eisenlohr
and M. Helen Perkins, Reference Department,
Deering Library, Northwestern University



United States Selective Service. College Qualification Tests. "Bulletin of Information." Mr.-Je., '51.

General information on procedure for obtaining permission to take College Qualification Test. Lists examination centers throughout the U. S. and Territories and gives sample questions.

American Association University Professors Bulletin 36 no. 4:679-93, '50. ".014 Again?" A. J. GREEN.

A discussion of the military use of those men who have special aptitudes and superior intelligence. It is hoped that college students upon completion of their course of study will be used only in military posts which will employ them at or near their highest efficiency.

Journal of Higher Education 21:488-9, D., '50. "College Students and Selective Service." R. H. ECKELBERRY.

Occupation 29:224, D., '50. "Draft Deferment Decisions Should Be Based on Tests."

The American Council on Education feels that a nationally administered examination should be given to all students to determine their aptitude for higher education. A score of 110 or more would make them eligible for college.

School Board Journal 121, D., '50. "Intelligence as a Basis for Exemption from Military Service." H. PUNKE.

A discussion of the value of intelligence tests; and the questionable approach of deferring men because of their scholastic abilities. There is an immediate need for persons who can render essential nonmilitary service now, and not for persons who show promise of rendering service at some future date.

School Review 59:809, Ja., '51. "Selective Service and Higher Education."

The national interest will be poorly served if decisions on manpower utilization are made on an emergency basis.

Science News Letter 59:218, Apr. 7, '51. "Military Experience Credit."

The American Council on Education recommends that credit be given on what the serviceman has learned. This would apply to both high schools and colleges.

Science News Letter 59:211, Apr. 7, '51. "One More Year of College."

Present requirements for deferment of college students.

Science News Letter 59:164, Mr. 17, '51. "College Students Deferred."

Students who are in upper brackets in class standing and have gained a high score in college aptitude tests may be deferred for one year.

Science News Letter 59:118, F. 24, '51. "Draft Control Planned."

New proposed draft bill calls for five-man Presidential commission to select, on a competitive basis, those students who will go to college. Financial assistance will be given to eligible students who otherwise could not afford to go.

Science News Letter 59:20, Ja. 13, '51. "Compromise Draft Plan."

Eighteen and nineteen-year-olds may be given college training after they have been put into uniform.

United States News and World Report 30:32-6, F. 2, '51. "How New Draft Will Affect 18-Year-Olds, Reserves, Veterans, College Students, National Guards; Interview." A. M. ROSENBERG.

Students in school at time of draft to be allowed to finish. A deferment of 75,000 top students to be given four months basic training and sent to college.

United States News and World Report 30:51, F. 2, '51. "We've Been Asked About Student-Draft Change."

Questions and answers concerning students in college.

United States News and World Report 29:34-8, S. 29, '50. "Coming Draft Problem."



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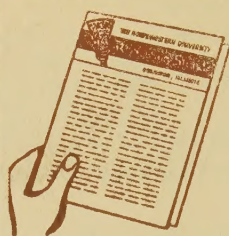
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